

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 remain pending in the present application. Claim 1 has been amended and claim 13 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claim 1 is independent.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner notes that the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 19, 2002 is missing from the file. In accordance with the Examiner's request, a copy of the IDS filed on February 19, 2003 is resubmitted herewith.

A new IDS containing a Rozenboom reference is also being submitted with this Amendment.

Drawings

The drawings have been objected to as failing to show every feature of the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse.

With regard to the "window opening on the connection bar" not being in the drawings, Applicants assert that the objection is now moot given the amendment to claim 1.

With regard to the "threads" of claims 5 and 15, Applicants assert that the threads are disclosed, *inter alia*, in at least one of Figs. 3, 4, and 6 and the discussions thereof. For example, Fig. 3 discloses a connecting bar 7 including bores 9, 10, 11, and 12 which are provided for fastening purposes and, if appropriate, have a thread (Par. 26). Applicants assert that the recitation of the term "threads" in claims 5 and 15 is proper.

Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the objections to the drawings be withdrawn.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants assert that the rejection is moot with regard to claim 13 given the cancellation without prejudice of claim 13.

Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse.

With regard to claim 1, Applicants assert that the recitation, “thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current” is adequately disclosed in the specification. For example, Fig. 1 discloses a single cavity 2, which extends essentially over its entire dimension. This connecting bar has a thinner wall 3, adapted to the low operating current (Par. 24). In Fig. 2, for example, a connecting bar 4 for electrical appliances and devices for a higher current intensity is shown. In this example embodiment, a thicker wall 5 is adapted to the higher operating current (Par. 25). Accordingly, in the case of lower current intensities, there is a larger internal cavity as a result of lower wall thicknesses, or in the case of higher current intensities there is a smaller internal cavity as a result of thicker wall thicknesses (Par. 12). Such a configuration helps allow for connecting bars that include the same outer cross section for nominal currents of different levels (Par. 2).

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Pritzen, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 3,584,138). Applicants respectfully traverse.

With regard to claim 1, Applicants assert that Pritzen fails to disclose a connecting bar that is hollow, with a similar outer cross section to other connecting bars, with a cross-sectional surface of a remaining wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current as recited in claim 1. Pritzen instead discloses wall thicknesses that are the same irrespective of nominal currents (Figs. 1, 3, 5, and 6). Pritzen is silent as to connecting bar wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current. Therefore, Pritzen can not disclose or suggest a connecting bar that is hollow, with a similar outer cross section to other connecting bars, with a cross-sectional surface of a remaining wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current as recited in claim 1. For at least the above reason, Applicants assert that Pritzen fails to disclose each and every element of claim 1.

With regard to claim 13, claim 13 has been canceled, rendering this rejection moot.

With regard to claims 2-4, 6, 8, 10, 14, 16, 18 and 19, Applicants assert that they are allowable for their own merits and because they depend from independent claim 1 which Applicants believe has been shown to be allowable.

Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claim 1-4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18 and 19 be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 5 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pritzen in view of Anderson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,820,178). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As discussed above, Pritzen fails to disclose or suggest a connecting bar that is hollow, with a similar outer cross section to other connecting bars, with a cross-sectional surface of a remaining wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current as recited in claim 1.

Anderson et al. is directed to a molded plastic electric power distribution busway outlet box attached to an electric power distribution busway system at regular intervals to electrically insulate bus bar take-off stubs extending therefrom. Anderson et al. is silent as to a connecting bar wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current. Therefore, Anderson et al. can not disclose a connecting bar that is hollow, with a similar outer cross section to other connecting bars, with a cross-sectional surface of a remaining wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current as recited in claim 1. Thus, Anderson et al. fails to make up for the previously mentioned deficiency of Pritzen. Accordingly, even assuming *arguendo* that the reference teachings were properly combinable, which Applicants do not admit, claim 1 (and thus claims 5 and 15) cannot be rendered obvious to one skilled in the art by Pritzen in view of Anderson et al.

Claims 5 and 15 are allowable at least because they depend from independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the art grounds of rejection.

Claims 7, 9 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pritzen. Applicants respectfully traverse.

As discussed above, Pritzen fails to disclose or suggest a connecting bar that is hollow, with a similar outer cross section to other connecting bars, with a cross-sectional surface of a remaining wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current as recited in claim 1.

Claims 7, 9, and 17 are allowable at least because they depend from independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the art grounds of rejection.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pritzen, Jr. in view of Giger, Jr. et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,609,215). Applicants respectfully traverse.

As discussed above, Pritzen fails to disclose or suggest a connecting bar that is hollow, with a similar outer cross section to other connecting bars, with a cross-sectional surface of a remaining wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current as recited in claim 1.

Giger et al. is directed to an electric power busway including joints having means allowing relative longitudinal movement of bus bar sections and having generally planar bus bar contact surfaces. Giger et al. is silent as to a connecting bar wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current. Therefore, Giger et al. can not disclose a connecting bar that is hollow, with a similar outer cross section to other connecting bars, with a cross-sectional surface of a remaining wall thickness being adapted to a respective nominal current as recited in claim 1, and thus fails to make up for the deficiencies of Pritzen. Accordingly, even assuming *arguendo* that the reference teachings could be combined, which Applicants do not admit, claim 1 cannot be rendered obvious to one skilled in the art by Pritzen in view of Giger et al.

Claims 12 is allowable at least because it depends from independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the art grounds of rejection.

Conclusion

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections and allowance of each of claims 1-12 and 14-19 in connection with the present application is earnestly solicited.

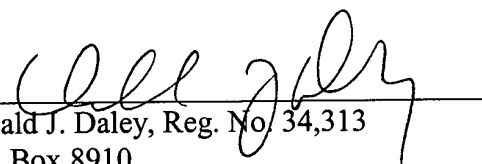
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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